

Foreigners in Our Midst

By E. V. Lucas

In "Land and Water"

"WATER!"
"Yessir."
Few words, I am told, sound so alluringly as these in the ears of Englishmen exiled in distant parts of the world. And I can believe it. More than half of the spell of London is contained in them.

Waiters interest one enormously. They are at once so able and so dense. They can have wonderful memories not only for our requirements, but for faces, yet be without any imagination; certainly not the imagination that can put one in another's place, which, in real life, is the only variety of imagination that counts. Thus it happens that they can extend to a guest the warmest welcome, and never, except under compulsion, approach him again; never volunteer any solicitude whatever. Whether this is their own fault or the fault of ourselves or our climate, I cannot say; but there is some evidence to think it not unassociated with English influence, because in their own countries their attentiveness is so much more constant. Take for example the wine waiter. In Paris this admirable functionary is by your side almost before you are seated, asking what he may



The Anti-Tipping League Holds Its Annual Dinner

—From Land and Water

bring; in London there is not a restaurant, however cosmopolitan, where he has not to be asked for, usually again and again. Why? Who shall say? Can it be that although these foreigners are ready to serve us and take our money, they are unfriendly at heart and have no reluctance to bring about our discomfort? Is that an impossible theory?

I suppose that an English waiter does now and then emigrate and carry on his old work; but he must be very rare. To spend our lives on alien soil in ministering to the hunger and thirst of foreigners is not an English custom; but how natural to foreigners it seems to be to feed us! What the number of foreigners settled in England in the catering industry is I have no notion, except that it must be immense. You meet them everywhere; they are in London in battalions and singly in the little watering places. Swanage knows them, and Herne Bay. Strange destiny for a youth from, say, Bellinzona, that North Italian town (or is it in Switzerland?) where the train stops to take breath after the tortuous descent from the St. Gothard, to wear evening dress all day long in an hotel in Llandudno carrying chops! I always ask these foreign boys where they come from, and get such unsettling replies; unsettling because they conjure up visions of other lands.

As to nostalgia, I wonder what proportion of the waiters who come to us return home. Some, of course, do so as quickly as possible, for they are here purely for language and experience, and must hasten back to assist their hotel-owning fathers at Zermatt, Lucerne and elsewhere. The aristocrats of the calling, these often the millionaires—although we, offering them shillings and sixpences and ordering them about, little dream of it. Of the humbler others, all probably when they first arrive here intend to go back; but so many seem to remain. There are foreign waiters in London who have been here, to my knowledge, for a quarter of a century. I can remember them as long. That they never contemplated such an exile I am certain, but they are Londoners now; in London their poor feet have grown flat, and in London they will die. Usually having English wives and English children, they are English in everything but syntax. All these old foreigners are either Italian or Swiss. French waiters in London one seldom or never meets. Considering that the French waiter in England has long been a familiar figure on the stage, this is odd. But emigration is not a French foible. There is no question of shame about it; the French waiter on his native soil is as independent a gentleman as you can find, and very happy in his work; it is simply that he does not care to leave his country.

Of no class of public servant does one know so little as of waiters. How do they spend what little spare time is theirs? What are their tastes, their hobbies? Where do they keep their non-official clothes, at home or at the restaurant? When do they have their own meals? And have they good appetites? What, would you say, is the first English word that they acquire? I have my own view, but what, I wonder, is yours. Mine is that their first English word is also their last—"nice." What do they think of us? What do they who serve think of us who eat and pay? Do they despise us more when the tip is too small or when it is too large? But the subject of tipping is so vast that I must stop. . . . Let me merely remark that I have long held the belief that the right time to tip a waiter is not at the end of a meal but at the beginning. If I seldom put the plan into practice it is because I have such fear that the result might be no better.

With the Laugh Cartoonists



The Bird: "Oh, I say, old bean, what ripping flowers, and so fresh; there is still some dew on them."
The Bird Man: "I know there is; but I'll settle up on the first of next month."
—From The London Mail.



Bringing the Gold to the Reichsbank



PEACE POTENTATES IN PARIS
Celebrating Citizen: "I don't care how many days a week I spend yelling 'Hurrah!'"
—From Le Rire (Paris)



Charlie recalls the glories of the Austrian fleet.

—From L'Assommoir



"So the beautiful Mimi has run off with a dancing master. Who's the fortunate man?" "Mimi's husband, old dear; only he doesn't know it!"
—From The London Mail.



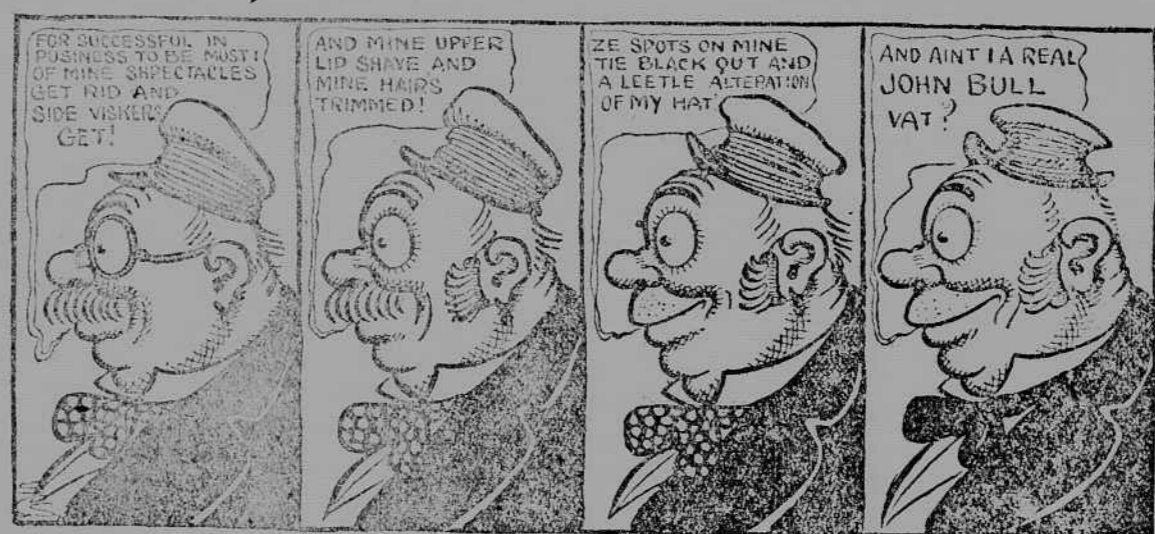
During the match shortage in Paris the line forms early at the corner lamppost

—From Le Pétrole-Mélo (Paris)



If another war broke out the man who has been through this one might think it more heroic—from what he daily hears—to stay at home.

—From The Sunday Pictorial (London)



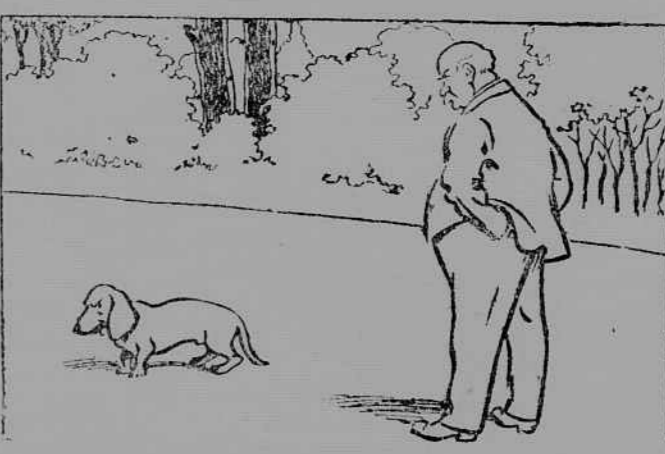
An Experiment in Evolution

—From The London Globe.

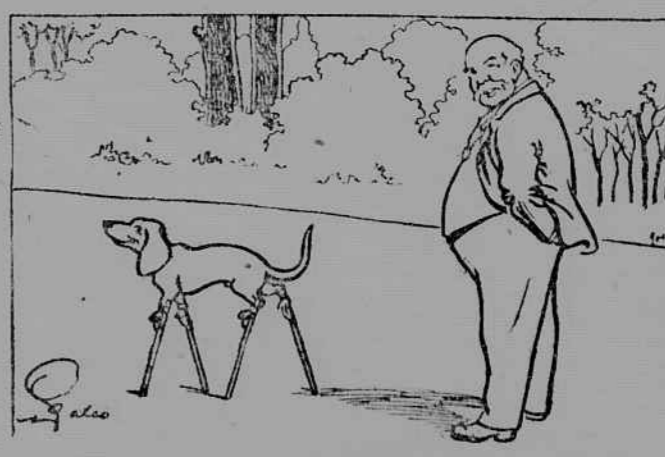


What is your most vivid remembrance of France? Restaurant checks.

—From La Blonnette.



It's unpatriotic to have a German dachshund. Oh! an idea



Parfait!
—From Le Pétrole-Mélo (Paris)

The Great Drouth

By Arthur Guiterman

In "Life"

WRITE on the Tablets of History, Chic,
Stranded in craps of the gloomiest dice:
"Michigan, Georgia, Virginia, Ohio,
Both the Dakota and Kansas are dry."

Idaho plowers askance at the Flagon;
Arkansas frowns on the Drink that strong;
Washington clambers the drouth Water-
wagon;
Iowa aridly follows along.

Begging for Milk with a siphon to thin it,
Maine and Montana are Off of the Staff.
Nothing with Traces of Alcohol in it
Calls for the hesitant protest, "Enough!"

Brandy ("for Heroes," according to Byron),
Beer, Ale and Whiskey, desired of men,
Put them with Absinthe—the scoundrelous Siren!
Down in the schedule of "Never Again!"

"Never again!" for the Bitters-and-Sherry,
Mint-crested Julep (the Southerner's pride),
Happy Tom Collins and Blithe Tom and Jerry—
All the loved names in "The Bartender's Guide!"

Banned are the Cocktails with Gin for a basis;
Highballs and Ricksies and Sings are accused;
Life is a Desert without an Oasis;
Man is an Island surrounded by Thirst!

Come, let us whisper the redoubt phrase
Born of a day that was other than this:
Telling of Smashes and Fizzes and Daisies,
Toddies and Floats of variegated bliss!

Shall we regret them? Oh, not one scintilla!
Rich Beer is glorious! Pop is divine!
What is more healthful than Soda pop?
Yours is a Grape Juice!—A Salute to mine!



The Mirage

—From The Brooklyn Daily Eagle.

Lest We Grow Too Serious

"I'M GOING to drive into the city with you today, John," said Mrs. Maxwell. "I want to do a little shopping." "I understand your strategic plans," answered her husband. "The drive is to be followed by a counter attack."—Tit-Bits.

She (after his proposal—Did you ever say anything like this to a girl before?) He—Heavens! You don't suppose it could be done like that the first time, do you?—Boston Transcript.

"Do you think the motor will ever supersede the horse?" "I hope not," replied Farmer Corntossel. "There must be some market for hay. I depend on what I make on hay to buy gasoline."—Washington Star.

"Why has your husband gone to work at a theatre as a stage hand?" "Because the doctor told him he must have a change of scene."—Baltimore American.

Mrs. Flatbush: "So he's married a widow?" Mr. Flatbush: "Yes, he's married to her all right." Mrs. Flatbush: "Was it love at first sight for him?" Mr. Flatbush: "No; she saw him first."—Yonkers Statesman.

"Aunt Belle, if you had your life to live over again, what would you do?" "I'd get married before I had seen enough to decide to be an old maid."—New York Globe.

"Better consider my course in efficient training. I can show you how to earn more money than you are getting." "I do that now."—Louisville Courier-Journal.